

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates. The cable ownership

cap is a crucial element of our democratic media, and it should not be weakened.

If existing rules limiting a single company to 30 percent of the national market are abandoned, the country's cable TV industry, now dominated by just eight companies, could be controlled by as few as two. Such consolidation threatens the diversity not just of cable TV but also of the Internet, since cable is likely to eventually be the way most people get Internet access.

Abandoning these rules will very likely mean higher cable rates for consumers. Since the deregulatory Telecommunications Act of 1996, cable rates have risen nearly three times as fast as inflation.

To assure openness and diversity in cable and in the internet's future, please reject the proposal to loosen rules protecting the public from over-concentration of media ownership.